

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Coach Rick Byrd of the Belmont University mens' basketball team on being selected NAIA Coach of the Year.

WHEREAS, the state of Tennessee and this legislative body are very proud of our coaches who work hard and succeed in preparing and molding players to accept the rigors of championship play in order to meet the challenges of life; and

WHEREAS, Rick Byrd, the highly regarded head coach of the Belmont University mens' basketball team, was recently recognized and honored as the NAIA Coach of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Belmont compiled a rare, unblemished 18-0 TCAC record this season; and

WHEREAS, under his careful tutelage the Rebels achieved their first number one ranking and reached the coveted NAIA Final Four, also for the first time; and

WHEREAS, the team compiled an exemplary 37-2 overall record, a fine winning percentage of .940; and

WHEREAS, they had a 27-game winning streak; and

WHEREAS, these latest accomplishments follow a successful pattern that Rick Byrd established when he became the head coach of Belmont in 1986, after serving admirably as head coach at Lincoln Memorial University and Maryville College and an assistant at Tennessee Tech; and

WHEREAS, after setting the foundation for later success with a 15-15 team, he guided his 1989 team to the first appearance for Belmont in the national tournament; and

WHEREAS, last season's squad won 19 of its last 21 games and advanced to the Elite Eight of the NAIA Tournament; and

WHEREAS, Coach Byrd, who enjoys country music and golf, is married to his strongest supporter, Carol; and

WHEREAS, his father, *Knoxville Journal* sportswriter Ben Byrd, remembers fondly that the first word that Rick said was “ball”; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause in our deliberations to specially recognize Rick Byrd on his accomplishments and honors; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor and congratulate Rick Byrd on being chosen NAIA Coach of the Year and thank him for the many thrills he has brought Belmont fans over the years.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation, with this final clause omitted from such copy.